

*The Budget—Mr. Whicher*

to British Columbia. I think he deserves a good pat on the back for his efforts.

Before I commence my main remarks this afternoon, let me say a word or two about the remarks of the last speaker. Of course, it is an honour to follow such a man as the leader of the NDP. He is articulate, and he has researched some of his facts, while others he has not. For someone like myself, who sits in the back benches of the Liberal party, it is rather difficult to understand a leader of any political party in Canada who would say that had he been bringing the budget forward instead of the Minister of Finance he would have come out for a system of tax credits.

I just happen to have in my hand the minority report of the hon. members of his party who were members last year of the House of Commons Committee on Finance, the hon. member for Waterloo (Mr. Saltsman) and the hon. member for Regina East (Mr. Burton). Nowhere in that minority report is there even the remotest suggestion of tax credits. As a matter of fact, their recommendation was as follows:

Therefore, we recommend that the present approach to the personal income tax schedule be retained.

There is nothing there about tax credits whatsoever. I suggest that the leader of the New Democratic Party should hold a caucus of his own members to find out what the backbenchers of that party think.

We listened to the hon. member for some time talking about the fact that he would like a full capital gains tax in Canada. He quoted Mr. Carter at some length and suggested what a great man he was. Should we not question the sincerity of a man who quotes Mr. Carter so far as a full capital gains tax is concerned, but when talking about dividend tax credits forgets about him altogether? I am sorry he is not here, but we must think seriously about the sincerity of a man who, in the same speech during the same five minutes, stands by Mr. Carter when it suits him and ignores him completely when referring to something else.

I must say I noted some of the old fire on the part of the NDP leader this afternoon. When I saw him on television on the Sunday after the minister brought down the budget he did not reveal that old spirit. As a matter of fact, and I say this in kindness to him, he looked somewhat older than his age. I asked myself whether this was the new look of the NDP and whether this was an example of the youth we want to lead our political parties here in Canada, such as the man we in the Liberal party have at the present time. I was reminded of a time years ago when I spoke to a page in the Ontario legislature who knew the son of the present leader of the NDP here in the House. I said to him, "There is Mr. Lewis' father". The young lad said to me, "It can't be his father, it must be his grandfather". I suggest that when he appeared on television he did not have the guts to really drive at the issue because the Minister of Finance had done many of the things that we in the Liberal party, and indeed the people of Canada, had asked. He found the old fire going out. If ever there was a father of a family which wanted power, I suggest you look at the

[Mr. Whicher.]

leader of the NDP in this House. If he were an Evangelist his theme song would be "Power in the Blood".

For the past three years, this government has been under severe criticism. Many of these criticisms have been unwarranted and some of them have been completely irresponsible. If I were to criticize the government it would be for sitting back and accepting some of these criticisms which in our opinion are completely irresponsible. You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that when we first came here three years ago, the thing we talked about every day was wheat, lack of sales of wheat. We talked wheat every day for 12 or 15 weeks, and when we finished with wheat we started on fish. We talked about the fishermen in Newfoundland, the fishermen on the east coast, the fishermen on the west coast. What are the results today? The results are that there have been substantial sales of grain throughout the world. The facts are that about three years ago, when the government was being criticized, there was a glut of wheat and grain across the world. However, to a large extent this situation has been remedied and there will be sales in the immediate future. At the present time this government has a trade mission in China, a place where substantial quantities of wheat can be sold in the future and, indeed, have been sold in the past. I suggest, too, that the fishermen on both the east and west coasts are in a much better financial position, and are in a much happier frame of mind, than they were two or three years ago.

● (3:50 p.m.)

This government has not been sitting around doing nothing, I can assure you. What was the next criticism we had? Do you remember the Biafra situation? Every single day members of the official opposition, of the New Democratic Party and of the Creditiste party, got up and tried to embarrass the government, particularly the Prime Minister, because they believed nothing was being done about the starving millions in Biafra. I want to tell you, as a matter of fact, that I received many letters about that. In my heart, I wondered whether the government was doing everything it could. Let us look at some of the criticisms which were made. Let us look at the Leader of the New Democratic Party, for example, who called the Prime Minister of Canada fatuous and callous. He said in one speech that we must have night flights because that would be the only way Biafra would accept the flights. The Leader of the New Democratic Party said these flights should be made in time or else the Biafrans would starve.

I doubt very much if millions of Biafrans starved. However, Mr. Speaker, if we look at page 1330 of *Hansard*, Volume 2, Second Session, we will see that that is what the Leader of the New Democratic Party said. I suggest we might look at the first words in Rudyard Kipling's poem "If". I refer to the words, "if you keep your head when all about you are losing theirs". We might be thankful that our Prime Minister did not lose his head. He did not suggest that we should go to war, although it was suggested that we should use some sort of force to get food, medical supplies and so on into Biafra. Of course, it was necessary to get more food there. The final